

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00 L-01

SP-02 PRS-01 SAB-01 SAM-01 PM-03 DODE-00 /040 W

----- 030938

R 051600Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2594

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

S E C R E T CAIRO 2466

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE GOVERNMENT RESHUFFLE FOLLOWING
DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT

1. DURING DISCUSSION WITH DCM AND CAO RE FORTHCOMING
PARLIAMENTARIAN VISIT TO US (BEING REPORTED SEPTTEL),
PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY DEPUTY SPEAKER DR. GAMAL EL-OTEIFI
INQUIRED WHAT PROBLEMS A POSSIBLE REQUEST FOR POSTPONE-
MENT OF THIS VISIT (SCHEDULED TO BEGIN APRIL 25) WOULD CAUSE.
WHEN ASKED FOR REASON BEHIND THIS QUERY, OTEIFI COMMENTED
ON LIKELIHOOD OF CABINET RESHUFFLE FOLLOWING POSSIBLE SECOND
DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT AND CONSEQUENT PEOPLE'S
ASSEMBLY INVOLVEMENT. HE INDICATED THIS WAS CERTAIN TO
TAKE PLACE IF DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT WERE CONCLUDED AND
WOULD OCCUR PROBABLY BY JUNE.

2. THIS CHANGE IN COMPOSITION OF CABINET WOULD INCLUDE
APPOINTMENT OF NEW PRIMIN, ACCORDING TO OTEIFI. WHEN
PRESSED AS TO LIKELY SUCCESSOR TO PRIMIN HEGAZI, HE SAID

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THIS WAS NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR BUT MOST LIKELY CANDIDATE WOULD

BE PRESENT ASSEMBLY SPEAKER SAYED MAR'I, ALTHOUGH HE GRANTED THAT MAR'I MIGHT NOT WISH TO ASSUME THIS POSITION NOW FOR REASONS OF HIS OWN. (COMMENT: IN MAKING THIS OBSERVATION, OTEIFI MIGHT HAVE IN MIND POSSIBLE MAR'I ASPIRATIONS TO SUCCEED SADAT WHEN LATTER'S TERM ENDS IN 1976. END COMMENT). OTEIFI NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT MAR'TS FAMILY RELATIONSHIP TO SADAT -- HIS SON IS MARRIED TO PRESIDENT'S DAUGHTER -- MIGHT PROVE TO BE COMPLICATION, AS IT HAS IN PAST.

3. WHEN ASKED ABOUT POSSIBLE OTHER CANDIDATES, OTEIFI CITED MAMDOUH SALEM, DEPUTY PRIMIN AND MININTERIOR AS ONE, ALTHOUGH HE COMMENTED THAT SALEM'S CAREER AS A POLICE OFFICER MIGHT MAKE HIM LESS ATTRACTIVE TO EGYPTIAN PEOPLE AND POSSIBLE ALSO TO OTHER ARABS. A THIRD CANDIDATE, BUT AN "OUTSIDE ONE", WOULD BE FONMIN ISMAIL FAHMY, WHO WOULD PRESUMABLY RETAIN HIS PRESENT PORTFOLIO ALONG WITH PRIME MINISTERSHIP. OTEIFI THEN WENT ON TO EXCLUDE CATEGORICALLY AS LIKELY APPOINTEES BOTH EX-FONMIN MOHAMED HASSAN EL ZAYAT AND EX-DEP PRIMIN ABDUL QADER HATEM.

4. OTEIFI INDICATED THAT HE HIMSELF MIGHT BE APPOINTED MINISTER FOR PARLIAMENTARIAN AFFAIRS IN NEW CABINET. WHEN ASKED WHO MIGHT REPLACE MAR'I AS ASSEMBLY SPEAKER IF HE WERE APPOINTED PRIMIN, OTEIFI SAID THAT IT WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY BE FORMER SPEAKER BADAWI.

5. COMMENT: OTEIFI WAS QUITE DEFINITE THAT SUCH A CABINET CHANGE WOULD TAKE PLACE AFTER A SECOND DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT AND HIS CERTAINTY CONFIRMS DISSATISFACTION WHICH HAS BEEN VOICED IN CAIRO CONCERNING PERFORMANCE OF HEGAZI CABINET. MUCH OF THIS CRITICISM HAS CENTERED UPON PERSONALITY OF HEGAZI HIMSELF WHO, ALTHOUGH RECOGNIZED AS COMPETENT IN ECONOMIC FIELD, HAS NOT BEEN CONSIDERED STRONG AND AGGRESSIVE ENOUGH LEADER TO GET EGYPT MOVING IN EFFORT TO OVERCOME ITS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND LAUNCH ITS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CABINET, REORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975CAIRO02466
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750077-0972
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750382/aaaacvju.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 JUL 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <02 DEC 2003 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POSSIBLE GOVERNMENT RESHUFFLE FOLLOWING DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT
TAGS: PFOR, EG
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006